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ABSTRACT

Presented are the skills needed for facilitating and linking. A role play experience provides the opportunities for issues and concerns to be made explicit. The role play process permits conflict points to be made explicit and to be specified in a psychologically safe context. Because the role play is "make believe," there is permission to express opinions which might not otherwise be expressed. Players are observed for behaviors. Debriefing the role play provides lists of concerns and issues which are sometimes associated with the adoption and implementation of innovations. Debriefing the observation provides lists of behaviors that facilitate or inhibit group problem solving. Guidance is provided for conducting and interpreting the role play experience. (Author/RE)

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National Diffusion Forum
Presentation Of

The Diffusion Training For THE FLORIDA LINKAGE SYSTEM

The Sheraton National Hotel,
August 15-16, 1978

AGENDA

Time	Activity
20 minutes	Overview of the Florida Linkage System training design
60 minutes	Skills needed for facilitating and linking - a role play experience for change agents (1) Review the schedule (2) Introduce the session (3) Rationale (4) Study the setting and the role and observer sheet (5) Attach number tags to identify role players (6) Role play with observation (7) Debriefing of role play situation (8) Identification of personal issues, concerns and skills helpful for problem solving, list on newsprint
20 minutes	What the modules are designed to achieve
20 minutes	Questions, answers and discussions

OBJECTIVES FOR THE ROLE PLAY EXPERIENCE

By participating in a role play episode and sharing the impressions of players and observers, participants will:

(1) identify the personal issues, concerns and problems which are associated with the adoption and implementation of innovations

(2) list skills which have been proven to be helpful in promoting conflict resolution and problem solving

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OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE PLAY EXPERIENCE

Facilitating and linking would be easy if everyone wanted the same thing. Since people are unique, teamwork for problem solving becomes complex. Many of the technical assistance skills for problem solving are the skills which help to clarify issues and concerns and resolve conflicts.

This module begins to explore the skills needed for facilitating and linking. A role play experience provides an opportunity for issues and concerns to be made explicit. The role play process permits conflict points to be specified in a psychologically safe context. Because the role play is "make believe," there is permission to express opinions which might not otherwise be expressed. This provides more complete information for analyzing conflict points and for analyzing the skills needed for dealing with them.

During the role play, players are observed for behaviors which are found in all groups. Debriefing the role play provides lists of concerns and issues which are sometimes associated with the adoption and implementation of innovations. Debriefing the observation provides lists of behaviors which facilitate and inhibit group problem solving.

THE SETTING

Last spring the Brightsville Elementary School faculty participated in a problem solving project and decided to adopt a new reading program which emphasized the needs of the ethnic minority pupils. They have completed a week-long training program conducted by Dr. Hart from the State University. There has been some discussion between some of the teachers and the principal regarding how, if at all, the training might help the Brightsville faculty with low achieving pupils. The principal has invited the following people to a meeting.

- the curriculum supervisor for the district
- a parent, chairperson of the school's Citizen's Advisory Committee
- Dr. Hart, the university professor who presented the training workshop
- the new director of the Community Action Agency
- the vice-president of the local teachers' union who is a teacher at a nearby elementary school
- a teacher who attended the workshop on multi-cultural education
- the TEC coordinator of the problem solving project
- the curriculum coordinator of the school

The Brightsville School is in a poor but mixed neighborhood. Approximately 35% are Black, 45% white, 15% Spanish Americans, and 5% are Oriental and native American. In about 20% of the homes, English is a second language, and consequently most of these children did not speak English when they entered Brightsville.

Brightsville had 871 pupils enrolled on the last day of school; at the beginning of the year, the school had 685 students.

The principal will open the meeting and serve as moderator.

ROLE CATEGORIES

The three major role categories listed below can be found in every group situation. Study them carefully and be prepared to identify them in an actual group setting.

CONCERN FOR GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING

TASK ROLES

1. Informing, contributing: Providing new data or offering opinions and feelings aimed at problem solving.

2. Clarifying: Restating, reflecting, or otherwise making clearer the contribution of another, without stating one's own position.

3. Expediting: Suggesting specific strategies to keep the group moving forward and avoiding distracting tangents. Initiates major tasks and sub-tasks.

4. Summarizing, synthesizing: Gathering together or correlating information or opinions from several members of the groups. (May be aided by note taking, especially on chart paper for all to see.)

5. Consensus testing: Checking with the group to determine whether a perceived agreement or state of progress really exists. Includes evaluating.

CONCERN FOR OTHER GROUP MEMBERS

MAINTENANCE ROLES

1. Supporting: Indicating affirmation of another member, either by backing an opinion, affirming information, or praising a behavior.

2. Mediating, harmonizing: Attempting to smooth conflicts between group members either by presenting compromise possibilities or by working to smooth over or avert the encounter itself.

3. Gatekeeping: "Opening the gate" by inviting others into the discussion for the purpose of broadening the base of participation, helping the less verbal to become involved, and assuring that all the resources of the group are used. May also serve to inhibit domination of the group by one or more individuals.

4. Consensus testing: same as above (#5 under Task Roles)

5. Process (method) observation: Perception checking for judgments about how others perceive the group's methods.

CONCERN FOR SELF

SELF ROLES

1. Dominating: Attempting to assert authority, seeking recognition and attention or control. Alighting the views of others, speaking loudly and being argumentative.

2. Blocking: Rigidly opposing new views, being over critical of group goals, bringing up issues already settled or rejected by the group.

3. Nit-picking: Magnifying and overemphasizing insignificant details and definitions.

4. Topic jumping: Enlarging or personalizing minor points at the expense of the major concern of the group. (Dominating, blocking and nit-picking can all be accomplished by topic jumping.)

5. Withdrawing, clowning: Showing lack of interest and involvement. Acting bored with group work, either jokes or fools around, or remains silent unless asked to participate.

1. Self concerns often signal a hidden agenda.

2. Adequate time spent on group maintenance relieves many self concerns.

3. Effective groups spend needed time on maintenance roles.

OBSERVER'S GUIDE #1

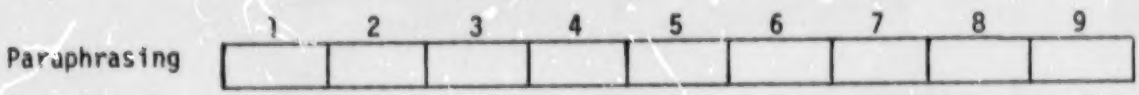
Group Role Rating Sheet

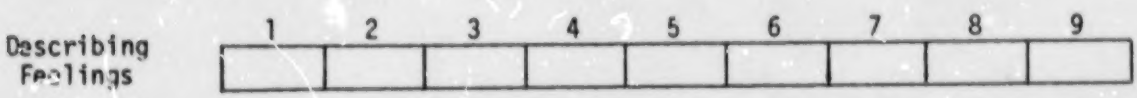
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9
TASK ROLES:									
Contributing									
Clarifying									
Expediting									
Summarizing									
Consensus Testing									
MAINTENANCE ROLES:									
Supporting									
Mediating									
Gatekeeping									
Process Observation									
PERSONAL ROLES:									
Dominating									
Clowning									
Blocking									
Withdrawing									
Nit-picking									
Topic jumping									

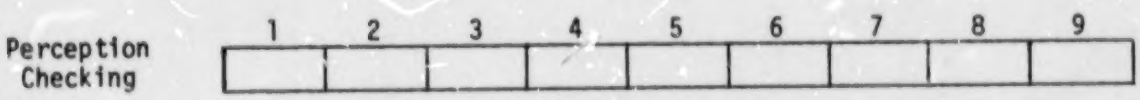
OBSERVER'S GUIDE #2

Change Agent Role Play Experience

During the role play, observe the players for the communication skills. When a player remembers to use a skill, make a tally mark in the appropriate box under that player's number.







Definitions:

PARAPHRASING: Make sure you understand the ideas, information and suggestions of others. To check your understanding, state the other's idea in your own words or give an example that shows what you think he was talking about.

DESCRIBING FEELINGS: When describing your feelings, try to make clear what feelings you are experiencing by identifying them. The statement must (1) refer to "I," "me," or "my," and (2) specify some kind of feeling by name, simile, action, urge or other figure of speech.

PERCEPTION CHECKING: You describe what you perceive to be the other's inner state in order to check whether you understand what he feels. That is, you test to see whether you have decoded his expressions of feeling accurately. You transform his expressions of feeling into a tentative description of his feeling. A good perception check conveys this message, "I want to understand your feelings--it this (making a description of his feelings) the way you feel?"

OBSERVER'S GUIDE #3

Change Agent Role Play Experience

What kinds of facilitating or blocking behavior did you observe:

VERBAL:

Player #	Behavior

NON-VERBAL:
(Postures, gestures, use of hands, facial expressions, sounds, etc.)

Player #	Behavior

ROLE #1

You are the District Curriculum Supervisor

- It is your responsibility to see that the district has a coordinated reading program.
- You sat in on the beginning and the ending of the new reading program training with emphasis on multicultural education.
- The project which brought this program into the district has not coordinated its activities through your office.
- Although the multicultural training workshop seemed sound enough, you are not at all sure that the processes and time used in this diffusion project are worthwhile.
- The school board is getting a lot of pressure to improve the basic skills performance of low achieving pupils.
- The legislature has mandated three hours of instruction per day on basic skills for all children.
- Financial resources in the district are limited.
- There is almost no inservice time available during the school year because the unions have bargained it away.
- There is no substitute pay available, and the norms of the district require a teacher to be in the classroom every day, with personal sickness the only excuse for absence which is well tolerated.

ROLE #2

<u>You are the parent</u>

- You are white, from the middle class, and active in the parent-teacher organization.

- You are concerned about your daughter who is above average in ability but still reading somewhat below grade level.

- You believe that schools do not provide help for the average child; this is why you became active in the school advisory committee.

- You believe that a fully integrated arts program is a vital building block for the basic skills.

- You believe that only white-English should be taught in the primary grades.

ROLE #3

<u>You are Dr. Hart, a university professor of curriculum</u>

- You presented the workshop training just completed.

- You have presented essentially the same workshop in three other places out of state. Each was received enthusiastically.

- You are committed to help the district with multicultural education and are willing to spend time at Brightsville.

- You are worried about how much time working at the school will take.

- You are anxious about being in schools. Each day there seems to be new problems. People keep asking for answers regarding problems about which there is little research.

- You have to publish to survive.

- You want to help, but you have to survive in the university system.

ROLE #4

You are the District Linker for the Diffusion Project

- Your training for this role warned you that values conflicts would be among the toughest you would encounter, but it has not provided you with much skill or knowledge for dealing with these conflicts.

- You have worked hard to become an accepted member of the team and an "insider" both in the district office and in the schools.

- You were careful to follow the prescribed steps for selecting an innovation for adoption, and feel fairly certain that Dr. Hart's expertise is as good as any.

- It has seemed clear to you all along that what the teachers really wanted was multicultural education, not a new reading program.

- You are aware that funding will not be approved for the adoption of unvalidated programs, or for programs other than those in basic skills.

- You are anxious to make the project successful, but are aware of a multitude of diverse, and sometimes conflicting goals.

ROLE #5

You are a teacher and vice-president of the local teachers' union

- You are a fourth grade teacher at the Forseight Elementary School in the same district with Brightsville School.

- You believe that teachers have a right to say what their inservice programs should and will be.

- The teachers' union was not consulted when it was decided that a week-long workshop on multicultural education would be held.

- You believe that teachers should not be expected to work beyond the school day without extra compensation.

- You believe that inservice should be held during regular duty hours.

- You are convinced that all the school board and administration are interested in are the scores on the pupil state assessments.

ROLE #6

<u>You are the new director of the Community Action Agency</u>

- You are Black and have been successful in getting acquainted with several Black parents. These are your supporters and they insist that you back their ideas.

- Their ideas are essentially this: You can't put all kinds of kids in the same room and teach them all the same way.

- You believe that the school should recognize and appreciate difference, should capitalize on differences.

- You believe that the school should build self-concept, recognize and encourage a child's pride in his/her own color, origins, and culture.

- You intend to press for a fully integrated program of multicultural education, not merely a fragmented program consisting of only a few ideas, or a single teacher.

ROLE #7

<u>You are a teacher who attended the workshop</u>

- You were in favor of adopting a new reading program which addresses the needs of the ethnic minority pupils; that is why you made personal sacrifices in order to participate in the training.

- You are not sure if it is wise to go ahead with the program now. The program presented by Dr. Hart is not very practical, and you don't know how to implement it. You didn't get from the workshop what you thought you would get.

- You don't see how multicultural education, as talked about by Dr. Hart, will help with the achievement test scores.

- You believe that teachers need released time during the year to get practical training, if it's available anywhere.

ROLE #8

<u>You are the curriculum coordinator at Brightsville and attended the workshop.</u>

- You support the need for multicultural education.

- You are skeptical that a training program developed for another time and place will help this situation, here and now. It has been your experience that most needs are situation specific.

- You believe that some of the central ideas of Dr. Hart's program could be adapted to fit into the existing curriculum. You are aware that many teachers have not yet been trained sufficiently to do this alone.

- Given the youth and inexperience of some of the faculty, and the amount of adapting needed, you feel compelled to push for one-to-one hands-on assistance for each teacher individually.

- You hate to see the teachers miss a regular school day. Little real teaching takes place when they are absent, and Brightsville's pupils need all the help they can get.

ROLE #9

You are the principal

You are generally in favor of what teachers want. You feel you have a good faculty. If they say they want a certain kind of program, you try your best to get it.

- You try to provide a good place for children and teachers to work together.

- You try to avoid open conflict, especially conflict which winds up on the superintendent's desk or in the local newspaper.

- You appreciate a peaceful school.

- You would like to see the achievement scores raised considerably; everyone feels basic skills are important.

- You are not convinced in your own mind that multicultural education will either (1) raise achievement scores, or (2) reduce controversy.

- You are always anxious to see that your teachers are not imposed on, particularly when large numbers are inexperienced, as they are at the present time.